Japanese Sayings.

An American gentleman, lately returned to this city after a prolonged residence in Japan, was recently discovered in the Stock Exchange by a reporter. The returned traveller recognized the reporter, whom he greeted cordially but mutely, as he refused to utter or listen to a word until both had escaped from the din and found themselves in the comparative quiet of a neighboring restaurant. There, after seating himself at a table and passing his hand across his forehead in a dazed fashion, he found his voice—a voice faint and low at first, like that of one who had just suffered from a severe shock or a surgical operation.

"You can hardly imagine how a native of Japan would be affected by such a fiends' carnival as we have just witnessed," he said. "The Japanese are such great slaves to etiquette that I doubt if they could forget, even in sleep, the iron rule of conventional propriety. They are never volnble or noisy, and are apt at expressing in a few words, by proverbs and epigrams, ideas that less conservative nations, like our own, elaborate. What, for example, could be more appropriate to the financial exhaustion of some of those shouting, and perhaps sinking, brokers, than the Japanese proverb, 'Man may shout when he can no longer swim.'

"'While the tongue works, the brain sleeps,' is another saying of theirs, expressing their contempt for many-worded men. Even oratory, as our stump speakers understand the term, is discouraged or barely tolerated. 'He is a wise man who can preach a short sermon,' and 'The silent man is often worth listening to,' are Jap sayings to the same effect. They are, also, as a people, quick at repartee; their wit is keen and tempered, and they can often administer a perfect snub in brief terse form."

"Are not the Japanese exceedingly polite, like the French?" inquired the reporter.

"Scrupulously, so, and, I think, unlike the French, naturally so. The exquisite delight of staring at a stranger who dines in public away from his dinner, so often practised in France and, I observe, sometimes copied"—glancing at a persistant starer at the next table—"in our own country, would not be understood or appreciated in Niphon, and practical jokes are never imported into that polite empire. Another of their proverbs. 'To be over-polite is to rule,' tells the whole story of their conception of true courtesy. Why even their familar form of farewell salutation, 'May to-morrow be all you wish,' if a little heathenish in its flattering nomination of you as the future clerk of the weather, is, after all, the essential oil of politeness and very soothing, when you know that if the weather to-morrow be bad you will not be held responsible for it."

"Not yet, and one or two of their proverbial phrases would seem to indicate that Japan is a cold, raw soil for that doctrine to be planted in, 'A prudent wife rarely crosses her husband's threshold.' 'After death a woman can plan no deceit.' 'Trust your wife while your mother's eyes are on her,' and 'Death alone makes a woman contented,' are not encouraging texts for preaching the doctrine of equal rights. There is, too, a certain bitter flavor of experience in the phrase, 'It is safer to dwell near Fusiyamia than with a wife's mother."

"So the stale raillery against mothers-in-law has even found sympathizers in Japan," observed the reporter, who had once tried to obtain a mother-in law, but had failed.

"Exactly. But you cannot call many of their proverbs stale or unprofitable. For instance, 'Dig two graves before cursing a neighbor,' and 'Tell no secrets to a servant' are not bad rules to follow. I have sometimes wondered, too, whether the Bard of Avon stole the Japanese proverbs, 'A man who lends money to a friend shall never see either his friend or his money again,' which recalls the sage advice of Polonius to his son, 'For loan oft loseth both itself and friend.' The Japanese sayings, 'To know the new, search the old' and 'if you hate a man let him live,' and even their, 'Famous swords are made of iron scrapings,' are old friends in new dress.—*New York Sun.*

The Origin of Croquet.

Croquet players who have considerable liking for this favorite and fashionable sport, will be interested in the origin of the game. Croquet, is not, as many suppose, of modern birth, but may be traced through its various stages to Persia, as far back as the eighth century. Its origin was polo, which the Persians played with a long handled mallet called chugan. In the ninth century the game made its way into the Eastern Empire, the original mallet changing itself to a staff ending in a broad bend filled with a net work of gut strings. "Thus," says a writer on the subject, "there appeared in the East, as belonging to the great sport of ball playing on horseback, the first shapes of two implements which remodelled the whole play of life of mediæval modern Europe, the chugan being the ancestor of the mallet used in croquet, and of an endless variety of other playing clubs and bats, while the bent staff, with its network, was a primitive racket."

We find that the original ball games in which sticks were used were played on horseback, and instead of polo being an outgrowth of these sports played on foot the latter are the changes made in the Persian game of chugan, which as has been said, was the parent of all our games in which artificial means are used on foot, was easy and natural, and the substitution of a club came by gradual changes, the hand being properly the original implement, which was superseded by the stick.

Marvelous Feats of Marine Divers.

The fatal leap of Prof. Odlum from Brooklyn bridge recalls to the New York *Times* the exploits of some other daring men who sought to obtain celebrity by jumping or diving from high places. The most widely known feat of this description is probably that of Sam Patch. The famous and fatal leap of that reckless man occurred in Rochester on Friday, November 13, 1829, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. During the centennial year a young French rope-walker entertained thousands of people who visited Niagara Falls by leaping into the river two or three times a week from a rope stretched from bank to bank 155 feet above the surface of the water. A piece of stout and very elastic rubber was fastened to the center of his heavy rope, and after walking out on the rope from the river's bank, the young Frenchman would take a firm hold of the free end of the rubber band and spring downward. He retained his hold of the band until it had reached perhaps twenty-five feet, and then letting go he would shoot, feet foremost, like an arrow into the river. The feat was repeated more than a dozen times, and the performer was in nowise injured.

The attempts of "Prof." Robert Donaldson, a young Scotchman, to jump from the East river bridge in 1882 attracted much attention. Mr. Donaldson first appeared on the unfinished bridge on May 11th of that year, attired in tights, and prepared to leap into the river below. He gave up the idea on that day in consequence of a strong gale which was blowing up the river. He publicly announced that he would try a second time to make the leap, but the custodians of the bridge kept careful watch of the New York and Brooklyn approaches and allowed no one to go upon the structure. Donaldson attempted to ascend the spiral staircase at the side of the great stone pier on the Brooklyn side, in the guise of a workman, on Wednesday, May 31, 1882, but he was recognized and stopped. A third attempt to get on the bridge was made by Donaldson on July 10th, but had to be abandoned because a portion of the planking of the footpath had been temporarily removed.

John D. Brumley, a painter of No. 402 East Forty eighth street, New York, while intoxicated, on Sunday morning, June 4, 1882, made a wager "for the drinks" with some of his companions that he would jump off High bridge. He walked to the central arch of the bridge and, after divesting himself of his coat and shoes, he sprang from the structure. In his descent he turned two somersaults, and struck the water feet foremost. He was taken out of the river unconscious, but subsequently recovered. The distance from the top of the bridge to the water where Brumley jumped is 145 feet.

A young Englishman named T. P. Donaldson dived from the roof of a shed on the pier of the National Steamship line, at the foot of West Houston street, on September 1, 1883. The distance from the top of the shed to the river was thirty-five feet. The feat was witnessed by a large number of persons. The diver was not injured.

Religion in Russia.

"In Russia all creeds are free." So Alexander wrote to the Holy Fathers in 1878. It was a barefaced falsehood then; let us see whether it is true now. In Wolbinia there are 60,000 colonists from Bohemia, Roman Catholics to a man. They wanted priests, so the Government got three from Bohemia. But what priests? Suffice it to say that they were all married. The colonists did not like that sort of thing, so the Government called together a "diocesan conference" of the districts of Dubno, Ostrong and Romno. The men who met at the conference to draw up a constitution of the church, were worthy of such "priests" as they had. One man proposed that they should form a Catholic Church without a Pope. Another advised the adoption of the Lutheran creed, but this was objected to because Luther was a German, and the Germans were the born enemies of the Bohemians. A third held that the tenets of Huss should be adopted. At last they agreed to call themselves Bohemian Brothers, and to reproduce a Greek liturgy in the native Bohemian tongue. The resolutions of the convention were approved of by the Russian Government. Most of the colonists turned with a shudder from the new creed, and declared that they would live and die Roman Catholics, as their fathers had done before them, and they sent for Polish priests to minister to them. Thereupon the Russian Government decreed that none of the colonists were to be allowed to acquire real estate except such as had joined the Bohemian Brothers. This decree is still in force. That's what they call religious freedom in Russia.—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

Japanese Fencing Match.

Next came two gentlemen in masks and wearing a costume which was manifestly that of Japanese-German Chor-Burs hen, equipped for the "Pawkboden," or fencing-ground. Round their waists were broad, leather belts or vests; from their girdles hung six square impenetrable lappets or plates. They wore long wooden two handed swords, such as were wielded of old by crusader knights, and such as are still used by elephant-hunters in Dongola. Between them stood an umpire who made them a speech. At it they went, but at the first blow one of the warriors called off. He had forgotten something. Now, be it borne in mind that the Japanese do nothing without salt. They put a little of it in their tea—for luck, I suppose—and when they get money they salt that down too with great exactitude. Stepping to one side the combatant took a drink of water, and made a sign, then he drank again, and finally taking a pinch of salt from a dish, went and threw it on the fencing-ground.

I had seen this done of old. Once in Philadelphia in a Japanese troupe the supers, to do their best, could not get the ropes of some apparatus to hold fast. Their was a terrific chattering, and then some one more quick-witted than the rest ran out and got a plate of salt, and threw some on the ropes. I need not say that in an instant these ropes were secured like magic. They were guyed not verbally, but saliuely. The fencers whacked away at one another—I once saw two colored women fight in exactly the same manner with whitewash brush handles—yelling all the time what I suppose were invocations to Diebboits, the great god of Japan, until the umpire put in and decided a foul.—*Labouchere's Letter.*

The Arab Spear.

The Hadendowa spear is from six to seven feet long. The handle is of a piece of hard mimosa or acacia, thinner than a broom handle. There is a long socket attached to the blade, into which the wood is driven and fastened. At the reverse end there is commonly a piece of twisted iron or telegraph wire, which serves the double purpose of weighting the handle, so as to counterbalance the blade, and to prevent the weapon from being pulled from the grasp. The spear-head or blade is rarely more than two inches broad by eight inches long. Going into battle the Hadendowas grease their spears from blade to hilt, so that it is impossible to wrest the weapon from their hands in a struggle. The spears used by the tribes up the Nile are much more formidable weapons. The handle is from seven to nine feet long, made of male bamboo wood. It is furnished with a terrible broad-bladed long spear-head, like that of the Hadendowas, kept bright as a mirror and sharp as a razor. The blade is sometimes fourteen inches long, and five inches wide. In truth, the Arab spear up the Nile looks more like an elongated trowel-blade than anything else. Shovel-heads our soldiers used to call them. They make a fearful wound, and it was with one of these that Col. Burnaby was struck in the throat and killed. Being exceedingly light weapons, although badly balanced, the Arabs can handle them with great dexterity.—*London Telegraph.*